

## Motorola Q Aims to Unseat RIM's BlackBerry

Ken Dulaney, Ben Wood

The design of Motorola's planned new wireless personal digital assistant (PDA) closely resembles the Research in Motion (RIM) BlackBerry and supports Microsoft Windows Mobile 5.0. RIM now faces its biggest threat ever.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

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### Event

On 25 July 2005, Motorola announced the Motorola Q, a wireless PDA. Motorola expects the new device to be available in early 2006.

### Analysis

The popularity of RIM's BlackBerry PDA created a dilemma for users — although they were happy with the BlackBerry's hardware design and security features, they worried about its proprietary platform and small memory. This led many to wish for a BlackBerry-like PDA that would operate on a Microsoft platform, allowing organizations to use existing development resources and to get bids from competing hardware suppliers.

It's rare that so broad a customer demand has taken so long to fulfill. The Q is the closest device we have seen to the BlackBerry yet. It offers several features whose lack has limited other products, including:

- Keys set at opposing angles to make thumb typing easy
- An Intel processor capable of running a broad set of offline applications
- Removable (mini-storage-disk) storage
- Thumb wheel support for easy access to e-mail
- A mini-USB (Universal Serial Bus) port for charging and syncing

Motorola's experience designing systems for the Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) and code division multiple access (CDMA) is also an asset. The Windows Mobile 5.0 environment features strong desktop synchronization and a much-improved e-mail system, when combined with systems from Good Technology, Intellisync or the upcoming Microsoft Exchange Service Pack 2 (SP2), among others.

Gartner believes Motorola may be erring by marketing the Q chiefly to the consumer market, focusing on the device's entertainment features and its "cool" factor. Other shortcomings include lack of support for non-camera and slotless options, which many enterprises have requested. At this time, Motorola has also not addressed some of the security options that RIM uses to its advantage.

Combined with the expected announcement of a Microsoft-based Palm Treo later in 2005, this announcement undoubtedly threatens RIM. RIM must respond by aggressively opening its gateways to the Q and other third-party devices to protect its network revenue streams — a difficult task, given that so much of its revenue comes from hardware. That said, it will be at least a year before RIM shipments may be affected. How RIM reacts during the rest of 2005 will determine whether it can maintain its current momentum.

Organizations with a third-party e-mail gateway that supports Windows Mobile will be able to implement the Q as soon as it ships. Those who wish to implement the complete Microsoft solution must wait for the shipment of Exchange 2003 SP2.

## Recommendations

**Organizations using BlackBerrys:** Test the willingness of BlackBerry users to switch. If they are willing, examine alternative wireless e-mail gateways that support stronger offline development environments and could possibly lower costs.

**Organizations acquiring wireless PDAs:** Evaluate the Q alongside other devices, including the BlackBerry, to select the best wireless solution for your operation. Consult the upcoming Gartner wireless e-mail Magic Quadrant for guidance.

**Analytical Sources:** Ken Dulaney and Ben Wood, Gartner Research

## Recommended Reading and Related Research

- "HP's iPAQ hw6500 Targets Two Markets With Widely Varied Needs" — Hewlett-Packard's first PDA with integrated Global Positioning System capability offers advanced wireless e-mail capabilities. **By Ken Dulaney and Todd Kort**
- "Enhancements Make Microsoft's Mobile E-Mail 'Good Enough'" — Microsoft's enhancements to its mobile e-mail solution make Microsoft's product worth considering as an alternative to more-expensive offerings. **By Monica Basso, Nick Jones and Ken Dulaney**

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## REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Corporate Headquarters  
56 Top Gallant Road  
Stamford, CT 06902-7700  
U.S.A.  
+1 203 964 0096

European Headquarters  
Tamesis  
The Glanty  
Egham  
Surrey, TW20 9AW  
UNITED KINGDOM  
+44 1784 431611

Asia/Pacific Headquarters  
Level 7, 40 Miller Street  
North Sydney  
New South Wales 2060  
AUSTRALIA  
+61 2 9459 4600

Latin America Headquarters  
Av. das Nações Unidas 12.551  
9 andar—WTC  
04578-903 São Paulo SP  
BRAZIL  
+55 11 3443 1509